

House File 469 - Introduced

HOUSE FILE 469

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A BILL FOR

- 1 An Act creating a licensed social worker loan repayment program
- 2 and revolving fund.
- 3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

1 Section 1. NEW SECTION. 261.117 Licensed social worker loan
2 repayment program — definitions.

3 1. A licensed social worker loan repayment program is
4 established, to be administered by the college student aid
5 commission for the purpose of increasing the number of social
6 workers serving in critical human service areas.

7 2. For purposes of this division:

8 *a. "Critical human service area"* includes but is not limited
9 to an area of the state with a shortage of social workers
10 providing health, mental health, substance abuse, aging,
11 HIV/AIDS, victim, or child welfare services, or communities
12 with multilingual needs. A critical human service area shall
13 be an area designated as a mental health professional shortage
14 area by the United States department of health and human
15 services health resources and services administration.

16 *b. "Licensed social worker"* means an individual holding a
17 license issued under chapter 154C who is employed in a critical
18 human service area.

19 Sec. 2. NEW SECTION. 261.118 Licensed social worker loan
20 repayment revolving fund.

21 1. *a.* A licensed social worker loan repayment revolving
22 fund is created in the state treasury as a separate fund under
23 the control of the commission. The commission shall deposit
24 moneys appropriated for purposes of the licensed social worker
25 loan repayment program, moneys repaid by loan repayment award
26 recipients who fail to meet the service area requirements, and
27 any other moneys obtained or accepted by the commission for
28 deposit into the fund.

29 *b.* Moneys in the fund shall be used for purposes of the
30 licensed social worker loan repayment program. Notwithstanding
31 section 8.33, moneys deposited in the fund shall not revert
32 to any fund of the state at the end of any fiscal year but
33 shall remain in the fund and be continuously available for the
34 program.

35 2. Notwithstanding section 12C.7, subsection 2, interest

1 or earnings on moneys deposited in the fund shall be credited
2 to the fund.

3 Sec. 3. NEW SECTION. 261.119 Loan payment awards.

4 1. Each applicant for loan repayment shall, in accordance
5 with the rules of the commission, do the following:

6 a. Complete and file an application for licensed social
7 worker loan repayment. The individual shall be responsible
8 for the prompt submission of any information required by the
9 commission.

10 b. File a new application and submit information as
11 required by the commission annually on the basis of which the
12 applicant's eligibility for the renewed loan repayment will be
13 evaluated and determined.

14 c. Complete and return on a form approved by the commission
15 an affidavit of practice verifying that the applicant is a
16 licensed social worker in a critical human service area.

17 2. Loan repayment awards shall be made annually to
18 applicants in the following order of priority:

19 a. Applicants who have received payment of an award pursuant
20 to this section in a prior year and who have provided social
21 work services in a critical human service area in the year
22 prior to such application.

23 b. Applicants who have not received payment of an award
24 pursuant to this section in a prior year and who have provided
25 social work services in a critical human service area in the
26 year prior to such application.

27 c. Applicants from underrepresented racial, cultural, and
28 ethnic groups and individuals with disabilities.

29 3. The contract for the loan repayment shall stipulate the
30 time period the licensed social worker shall practice in a
31 critical human service area. In addition, the contract shall
32 stipulate that the licensed social worker shall repay any funds
33 paid on the person's loan by the commission if the person fails
34 to practice in a critical human service area for the required
35 period of time.

1 4. *a.* The annual amount of a licensed social worker loan
2 repayment award shall be six thousand five hundred dollars or
3 twenty percent of the licensed social worker's total federally
4 guaranteed Stafford loan amount under the federal family
5 education loan program or the federal direct loan program,
6 including principal and interest, whichever amount is less. A
7 recipient shall not receive loan repayment that exceeds the
8 total remaining balance of the recipient's student loan debt or
9 twenty-five thousand dollars, whichever is less.

10 *b.* Awards shall be within the amounts appropriated for such
11 purpose and shall be based on the availability of funds.

12 5. The commission shall adopt rules pursuant to chapter 17A
13 to administer this division.

14 EXPLANATION

15 The inclusion of this explanation does not constitute agreement with
16 the explanation's substance by the members of the general assembly.

17 This bill creates a licensed social worker loan repayment
18 program administered by the college student aid commission.
19 Applicants for the program must enter into an agreement with
20 the commission, agreeing to work for a specific period of time
21 in a "critical human service area", defined as a geographic
22 area in Iowa with a shortage of social workers in health,
23 mental health, substance abuse, aging, HIV/AIDS, victim, or
24 child welfare concerns, or communities with multilingual needs.

25 The program provides a specific annual benefit, up to
26 \$6,500, for licensed social workers who have worked in a
27 critical human service area in the previous year. No recipient
28 shall receive loan repayment that exceeds the total remaining
29 balance of the student loan debt and no recipient shall receive
30 cumulative awards in excess of \$25,000.

31 The program is funded by a special revolving fund in
32 the state treasury, controlled by the college student aid
33 commission. The fund consists of moneys appropriated for
34 purposes of the program, repayments by participants who fail
35 to meet the service area requirements, and any other available

1 moneys. Moneys deposited in the fund do not revert to any
2 other fund at the end of any fiscal year but shall remain in the
3 fund and be continuously available for the program. Interest
4 or earnings on moneys deposited in the fund shall also be
5 credited to the fund.